

Message Text

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TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT OP-ED COLUMN BY VICTOR ZORZA IN
WASHINGTON POST WEDNESDAY, DEC. 29, HEADED "DEBATES IN
PEKING."

2. "PEOPLE'S HEADS ARE NOT LIKE LEEKS," MAO SAID TWENTY
YEARS AGO. "IF YOU CUT THEM OFF, THEY WON'T GROW AGAIN."
THE SPEECH HAS NOW BEEN PUBLISHED WITH THE KIND OF FAN-
FARE THAT PEKING RESERVES FOR MAJOR STATEMENTS OF POLICY--
AND, AS IN ALL SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, THERE IS MORE TO IT
THAN MEETS THE EYE.

3. THE SURFACE MEANING OF MAO'S PRONOUNCEMENT IS THAT HIS
WIDOW CHIANG CHING AND HER THREE ACCOMPLICES SHOULD
NOT BE EXECUTED, AS SOME OF THE VICTORS IN THE PEKING
POWER STRUGGLE DEMAND. THE FIRST EXECUTION, MAO FEARED,
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WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY A SECOND, THEN A THIRD, "AND THEN MANY
HEADS WILL BEGIN TO ROLL."

4. IN CHINA TODAY, WITH POLITICAL PASSIONS RUNNING HIGH
AND ATTEMPTS TO SETTLE OLD SCORES EVIDENT EVERYWHERE, THE
BLOODBATH THAT WOULD FOLLOW THE FIRST EXECUTIONS

WOULD BE FEARFUL TO BEHOLD.

5. THE CALL FOR BLOOD TO WHICH MAO'S SPEECH IS A REPLY IS NOT A SIMPLE CALL FOR VENGEANCE. IT IS AN ISSUE IN THE POLICY DEBATE NOW GOING ON IN THE POST-MAO LEADERSHIP ON WHICH ROAD CHINA SHOULD TAKE. SOON AFTER MAO'S DEATH, SIGNS IN CHINA SEEMED TO SUGGEST THAT THE NEW LEADERS, HUA KUO-FENG AND HIS SUPPORTERS, PARTICULARLY IN THE ARMY, WANTED TO ADOPT SOME ASPECTS OF THE STALINISTS' MODE OF GOVERNMENT. THIS INTERPRETATION WAS DISPUTED ON THE GROUNDS THAT NO CHINESE LEADERS WOULD WISH TO EMULATE THE SOVIET EXAMPLE. BUT THE BLOOD PURGE WHICH SOME CHINESE LEADERS WANT TO LAUNCH IN ORDER TO LIQUIDATE THE OPPOSITION IS A TYPICAL STALINIST DEVICE, AS WAS THE EARLIER ATTEMPT--LAUNCHED BY THE ARMY PRESS, AND SINCE FOLLOWED BY ALL THE CHINESE MEDIA--TO BUILD UP A "CULT OF PERSONALITY" FOR HUA.

6. THE OPPOSITION TO HUA WITHIN THE POLITBURO BECAME EVIDENT ALMOST AS SOON AS HE HAD ARRESTED CHIANG CHING AND HER ASSOCIATES. HIS OPPONENTS WERE PRESSING FOR A FORM OF "COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP" RATHER THAN THE ONE-MAN RULE WHICH HE AND THE ARMY WANTED. IT EVEN BECAME POSSIBLE TO IDENTIFY HUA'S MAIN CHALLENGER, PEKING MAYOR WU TE, WHOSE SPEECHES, SEEMINGLY IN PRAISE OF HUA, WERE COINED IN TERMS SUGGESTING THAT HE HARBORED CERTAIN RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE NEW LEADER.

7. WU TE ;AS NOW DISAPPEARED FROM PUBLIC VIEW. SOME WESTERN ANALYSTS WHO REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE FIRST SIGNS OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HUA AND WU TE AS REAL NOW HASTEN TO UNCLASSIFIED

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WRITE HIM OFF ALTOGETHER. THIS IS SOMEWHAT PREMATURE.

8. IT IS WU TE WHO HAS ASSOCIATED HIMSELF PUBLICLY WITH THE POLICY OF LENIENCY TO THE RADICALS, WHILE HUA HAS INSISTED THAT THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THEM MUST BE CARRIED OUT "TO THE END." THE USE OF MAO'S SPEECH TO OPPOSE THE CALLS FOR THE EXECUTION OF THE RADICAL LEADERS THUS SUGGESTS THAT THE WU TE FACTION IN THE POLITBURO IS STILL STRONG ENOUGH TO HAVE FORCED ON HUA AND HIS MILITARY SUPPORTERS THE PUBLICATION OF A DOCUMENT WHICH IS, IN SOME WAYS AT LEAST, UNWELCOME TO THEM.

9. NOR HAVE HUA AND THE MILITARY BEEN ABLE TO FORCE ON THE REST OF THE POLITBURO THE MAJOR INCREASES IN ARMS SPENDING WHICH THE RADICALS HAD OPPOSED. EVEN AFTER HUA DEFEATED THE RADICALS THERE WERE SIGNS, BETWEEN THE LINES OF THE CHINESE PRESS, THAT THE DEBATE ABOUT DEFENSE SPENDING WAS CONTINUING IN THE LEADERSHIP. WHAT

THE EVIDENCE SUGGESTED WAS THAT THE ARMY WANTED FROM HUA MORE MONEY FOR MORE AND BETTER WEAPONS, AS AN IMMEDIATE

REWARD FOR ITS SUPPORT, AND THAT HE WAS UNABLE TO GRANT IT TO THEM BECAUSE OF CONTINUING OPPOSITION IN THE POLIT-BURO. THE WU TE FACTION IS NOW USING MAO'S VOICE FROM THE GRAVE TO PUT THE MILITARY, TOO, IN THEIR PLACE.

10. MAO INSISTED, AS POLITICAL LEADERS HAVE OFTEN DONE ELSEWHERE, THAT THE BEST WAY TO INCREASE THE COUNTRY'S DEFENSE STRENGTH WAS TO STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMY FIRST-- AND TO DO THIS BY REDUCING MILITARY EXPENDITURES. HE WANTED TO CUT DEFENSE SPENDING BY A THIRD SO THAT, HE ARGUED, THE MONEY COULD BE USED "FOR BUILDING MORE FACTORIES AND TURNING OUT MORE MACHINES." THE DEFENSE BUILD-UP WHICH THE MILITARY WANTED COULD BE OBTAINED "ONLY WITH THE FASTER GROWTH OF ECONOMIC CONSTRUCTION."

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11. THERE ARE MANY OTHER POINTS IN THE MAO SPEECH WHICH COULD PROVIDE AMMUNITION FOR THOSE WHO WISH TO CHALLENGE HUA'S POLICIES. THE OLD ARGUMENT ABOUT PRIORITY FOR HEAVY INDUSTRY ON THE ONE HAND, AND AGRICULTURE AND LIGHT INDUSTRY ON THE OTHER, WAS RESOLVED IN THE MAO SPEECH TO THE DETRIMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY. BUT HUA'S EMPHASIS ON MODERNIZATION DEMANDS A MUCH HIGHER PRIORITY FOR HEAVY INDUSTRY THAN WAS GIVEN TO IT IN THE PAST (EVEN THOUGH HE ALSO WANTS MORE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF AGRICULTURE.) THE MILITARY HAVE ALWAYS ARGUED FOR A STRONGER HEAVY INDUSTRY AS THE FOUNDATION OF A STRONGER DEFENSE CAPABILITY. THE RADICALS OPPOSED TOO RAPID A PACE OF MODERNIZATION BECAUSE THEY FEARED ITS EFFECT ON THE PEASANT-BASED MAOIST MODEL OF SOCIETY.

12. THUS CHINA'S MOST FATEFUL YEAR SINCE THE COMMUNISTS TOOK POWER ENDS, AS IT BEGAN, IN A FOG OF WORDS WHICH SEEMS, AT FIRST SIGHT, TO HAVE MADE THE CONFUSION WORSE. BUT THE FOG CAN BE PENETRATED. THE OUTLINES OF THE CONFLICT HAVE REPEATEDLY EMERGED FROM THE FOG TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT BEHIND THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER LIES A DEBATE OVER THE POLICY WHICH IS TO DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF A NATION OF 900 MILLION PEOPLE. IT IS SURELY NO EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT THE WAY IN WHICH THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD'S MOST POPULOUS--AND POTENTIALLY MOST POWERFUL--NATION IS DETERMINED COULD, IN THE LONG RUN, ALSO DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD. (END TEXT)
ROBINSON

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